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PROJECT ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

SUMMARY:

- A. PROJECT NUMBER AND TITLE: 515-0254.00G
CENTRAL AMERICAN PEACE
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (CAPS II)
- B. IMPLEMENTING AGENCY: USAID/COSTA RICA
- C. DATE OF OBLIGATION: 05/04/90
- D. PACD: ORIGINAL: 9/30/98
REVISED: 8/31/96
- E. AMOUNT OBLIGATED: \$6,360,000
- F. TOTAL EXPENDITURES
(as of 7/30/96): \$5,891,368
- G. HOST COUNTRY CONTRIBUTION: N/A
(LOCAL CURRENCY COUNTERPART)

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I. PROJECT PURPOSE:

To equip a broad base of leaders and potential leaders with technical skills, training, and academic education and an appreciation and understanding of the workings of a free-enterprise economy in a democratic society.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Like its predecessor, CAPS I, this Project selected participants for long-term (academic and technical) and short-term technical programs. Selection criteria included current and potential leadership qualities and economic need. Exposure to the U.S. culture was an objective of the "Experience America" component of the Project.

III. MAJOR OUTPUTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

This Project focused on training those who were judged to be leaders in their fields as well as those who demonstrated the potential for future leadership activities. Participants were from the private and public sectors, although the Project emphasized the private sector. The Project offered training opportunities on both a long and short-term basis and introduced the trainees to the social, political and cultural values in the United States.

To allow the participation by national, provincial and local leaders, the geographic scope of the program was broad. Special attention was given to achieve a high level of participation of the economically disadvantaged, women and members of the minority population groups, which had not received sufficient support in the past.

There were three basic components in this training program:

- A. Long-term academic program: 2 undergraduate and 85 graduate students have pursued university studies in the United States under CAPS II. Fields of study included Engineering, Journalism, Education, Agriculture, Business Administration, Public Administration, Environmental Sciences, and International Law. These areas of study were consistent with both the intentions of the participants and with Costa Rica's development priorities.
- B. Long-term technical program: 60 high school students of talent and/or leadership potential received training in the United States during nine months (a full school year). This component of the Project was managed by FUNAC, in collaboration with the National 4-H Council in the United States. The training consisted of (1) an introduction and orientation to U.S. life and culture, (2) homestays with families throughout the U.S., which enabled them to participate fully in the life of the family, the secondary schools they attended, and their "adopted" communities, and (3) an evaluation and debriefing session, which enabled them to more fully comprehend their U.S. experiences, as well as to prepare for the adjustments of returning to Costa Rica.

In addition, before departing for the U.S., participants attended an intensive six to ten weeks of English language and cross-cultural training program in Costa Rica, followed by a one-week "orientation" at the 4-H Center in Washington, D. C.

- C. Short-term Training Program: 225 participants attended training programs in the United States, designed especially to meet their needs. Groups of 20 participants each, were sent to the United States for a period of four weeks. The groups were comprised mostly of community and school leaders, who lived and worked in rural or semi-rural areas.

All of the trainees, with the exception of eight, who will finish their Master's Degree programs in the U.S. in late August, have returned to Costa Rica and are applying their skills to their respective areas of expertise, contributing to the development of the country and as leaders, their multiplier effect has been extraordinary.

IV. OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

This training Project, in addition to the new knowledge and skills, gave the trainees a new vision of themselves, with increased confidence and greater sense of responsibility, a new view of the world, being more open minded and aware of the many options available. Knowledge of the English language enabled the trainees to get better jobs, obtain promotions and increased incomes.

Because the focus of the CAPS II Project was on the socio-economically disadvantaged and women, this Project has contributed significantly to the Mission goal to "enhance sustainable access to the resources needed by the disadvantaged in order to participate actively in the economy." In fact, 51% of all participants under this Project were women, which greatly exceeded the 40% established by USAID/Washington.

V. LESSONS LEARNED:

The Project was well-designed, especially in targetting socially and economically disadvantaged leaders. It was successfully implemented as planned and it is already accomplishing the objectives set out.

For the long-term academic component of this Project, the establishment of a selection committee composed of representatives of the Mission's technical divisions, expertise in the field of training, returned participants and members of the Training Office, and the selection criteria established by the Mission, were key elements in the success of this Project.

In addition, the use of intermediary institutions for the short-term technical component, assured the broad participation of the socio-economically disadvantaged in the overall training program.